



Early Graduation

Guide for Families

As a parent/guardian, what issues should I consider surrounding Early Graduation?

There are many factors which affect a student's decision to participate in the Early Graduation Pathway. All students are unique. Please consider the following as your student is making this major decision.

- 1) Is your student emotionally mature enough to work independently?
- 2) Is your student socially immature and would mind being in classes with students that are older?
- 3) Is your student one who has a plan for the future?
- 4) Does your student want to stay in high school to complete four years of activities, sports or competitions?
- 5) Would your student benefit from taking advanced level, AP, IB or dual credit courses-gaining college credit while remaining in the high school environment?
- 6) Are you ready financially to send a student to college as a sophomore or junior?
- 7) Are there scholarships, academic opportunities or events in the high school that your student would benefit from by staying four years?
- 8) Are there opportunities for athletic scholarships or extra playing time if your student stays in high school four years?
- 9) Does your student have a career track that they can add onto their college readiness by staying four years?
- 10) Early Graduation does not require two years of world language study for a diploma, but many four-year undergraduate programs require two years of world language study for admission, does Early Graduation adequately prepare your student for their academic future?

Early Graduation is a decision that should be agreed upon by the student and the family, after discussions with post-secondary admissions counselors and school counselors about criteria for success.

Items for Consideration:

Students are more successful in completing the Early Graduation pathway and demonstrating success after graduation when they have set career and college goals and are not trying to use the Early Graduation pathway as a way to leave school early. Think about what your student will be able to do with a high school degree and no further education at 16 or 17. The world today demands highly qualified and skilled workers in most jobs. The one predictor of a lifetime of higher earnings is the number of years of schooling completed past high school. The greater the years in post-secondary attained, the higher salaries are over a longer period and the lower the levels of unemployment.

If you are concerned with your son or daughter having "senior" status, being valedictorian or participating in any of the Governor's programs the summer of their junior year – do not have your student do Early Graduation.

If you want your student to have full access to senior perks, parking, lunch spots, senior proms or pictures, special trips or privileges given to fourth year seniors at your school, speak first to your school leadership to get a clear picture of what is possible before doing Early Graduation.

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It is a district decision what, if any, senior privileges will be granted. The state has no authority or leverage over individual schools and districts in these matters.

Early Graduation works on a different system or definition of high school completion than completion of course in order to mark them as a junior or senior. Early Graduation is based on performance based criteria, meeting the academic criteria in three years or less. The years are a student's COHORT group. They are with that group when they enter 9th grade of high school. If a student enters high school in 2017-2018, their COHORT group is anticipated to graduate in four years or 2021. To be eligible for Early Graduation, that same student would need to graduate a year or more before their COHORT group in 2019 or 2020.